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ABSTRACT

The eight goals and the corresponding strategies outlined in this document reflect Ohio's special education plan for the 1990's. The goals are based on Ohio's mission of special education for students with handicaps, which is to prepare each student to be a contributing member of society by providing high-quality programs, research, and services designed to develop academic, communication, social, citizenship, and career/life skills that lead to independence as adults. The goals include: (1) provide an appropriate education for all preschool-age children with handicaps; (2) work collaboratively with regular education personnel to provide educational services to children who are handicapped or at risk; (3) redefine special education eligibility criteria; (4) increase opportunities for employment and/or postsecondary education for special education graduates; (5) improve preservice and inservice education for both regular and special education personnel; (6) improve instructional programs; (7) provide supportive services and training to families; and (8) evaluate special education program effectiveness through student outcomes. The action plan also contains a glossary of terms and a time line for implementation of the strategies. (JDD)

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Ohio Speaks

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Working Together To Shape The Future of Special Education

A Special Education Action Plan for the 1990's

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1990

OHIO SPEAKS

Working Together to Shape The Future of Special Education

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A SPECIAL EDUCATION ACTION PLAN FOR THE 1990's

STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COLUMBUS
43266-0308

FRANKLIN B. WALTER
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

June 1990

Dear Colleagues:

The formation of Ohio's Special Education Futures Forum in 1988 reflected a commitment on the part of the State Board of Education to provide the kind of educational programs and services that will enable students with handicaps to become full members of society.

The 30 dedicated individuals who comprised the Forum spent two years studying issues that affect special education in Ohio. Their first-year efforts resulted in the identification of eight objectives for improving the quality of special education in Ohio. These eight objectives, now referred to as goals, formed the basis of a draft action plan that was disseminated statewide in September 1989 for local and regional response.

Comments and suggestions in response to the draft action plan were received from school administrators, regular and special education teachers and administrators, related service personnel, parents, and personnel serving Special Education Regional Resource Centers, County Boards of Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities, and universities. This feedback was analyzed and used to revise the action plan.

Guided by the mission statement, the eight goals and corresponding strategies outlined in this document reflect Ohio's special education action plan for the 1990's. While some of the goals are not new, their accomplishment remains critical if we are to meet the diverse needs of tomorrow's youngsters.

As we enter the decade of the 90's, the provision of a quality education for all youngsters, including those with handicaps, continues to be an Ohio priority. Implementation of the strategies outlined in this publication, while requiring the active involvement of individuals at all levels, will do much to help us prepare students for life in the twenty-first century.

I would like to thank Forum members, Department of Education staff members, SERRC personnel, and the many dedicated individuals who contributed their time and energy to improving the special education system in Ohio. Their tireless efforts and commitment will ensure our constant examination and continual refinement of programs and services on behalf of youngsters with handicaps.

Sincerely,

Franklin B. Walter

Franklin B. Walter
Superintendent of Public Instruction

INTRODUCTION

Ohio's Special Education Futures Forum was commissioned in February 1988 by Superintendent of Public Instruction Franklin B. Walter to make recommendations for improving Ohio's special education system.

Needs expressed by the education community to deliver special education services earlier, to assist regular and special educators in working together to accommodate all students, and to be accountable for special education student outcomes, in part, prompted the formation of the Futures Forum.

Forum members met monthly between March 1988 and March 1989, hearing presentations and interacting with educational leaders as they examined issues impacting the future of special education in Ohio.

The following four questions provided the structure for the Forum's deliberations and guided the process used to develop the special education action plan for the 1990's:

- Who should receive special education?
- How should the effectiveness of special education be measured?
- Where should special education be delivered?
- What should be the content of special education?

The process used by the Forum, beginning in March 1989 and culminating in the June 1990 publication of the special education action plan, included the following steps:

March 1989	Future event statements generated in response to each of the four questions
April 1989	Consensus regarding priority future event statements reached through likelihood-impact analysis
June 1989	Mission statement refined and eight objectives identified based on likelihood-impact analysis for improving the quality of special education in Ohio
September 1989	Draft action plan developed and disseminated statewide for local and regional response
October 1989 – February 1990	Feedback received regarding draft action plan analyzed and incorporated into plan
March 1990	Revised draft action plan reviewed by Futures Forum
June 1990	Special education action plan for the 1990's published

Implementation of the strategies outlined for each of the eight goals that follows has implications for parent and education professionals at all levels.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of special education for students with handicaps is to prepare each of them to be a contributing member of society by providing high-quality programs, research, and services designed to develop academic, communication, social, citizenship, and career/life skills that lead to independence as adults.

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GOALS and STRATEGIES

Goal #1:

To provide an appropriate education for all preschool-age children with handicaps.

Strategies

A. Emphasize, beginning in fall 1990, identification activities and free, appropriate public education programs and services available to preschool-age children with handicaps in Project OHIO public-awareness campaigns.

B. Monitor, beginning in fall 1990, programs for the education of preschool-age children with handicaps for regulatory compliance, quality and cost of service delivery, and worthiness of dissemination as a model practice.

C. Develop and implement prior to July 1991 rules for the education of all preschool-age children with handicaps that provide for a continuum, including categorical and noncategorical placement and integration with nonhandicapped children; developmentally-based programming; appropriate staff ratios; and, an adequate number of related service personnel.

D. Maintain effort in the areas of (a) research and development of model early childhood special education training programs at the preservice and inservice levels, (b) information dissemination, (c) interagency collaboration, (d) transition planning, (e) program evaluation, and (f) funding for experimental preschool units in accordance with RFPs.

Goal #2:

To work collaboratively with regular education personnel to provide educational services to children who are handicapped or at-risk.

Strategies

A. Issue requests for proposals (RFPs) by November 1990 to LEAs for the development of pilot programs that (1) serve students with handicaps in regular education classrooms; (2) allow noncategorical or cross-categorical instruction based on students' diagnosed educational needs; and (3) allow team teaching by regular and special education personnel.

B. Evaluate, beginning in September 1992, the effectiveness of the pilot programs described in A above.

C. Analyze, beginning in September 1992, data regarding the effectiveness of pilot programs funded under RFPs.

D. Implement fully by July 1993 the intervention assistance team (IAT) approach in Ohio schools.

E. Recognize, beginning in August 1993, model programs developed in response to RFPs.

F. Disseminate, beginning in September 1993, information about model programs developed in response to RFPs.

GOALS and STRATEGIES

Goal #3:

To redefine special education eligibility criteria.

Strategies

A. Establish by September 1992 a statewide task force to review the results of the pilot program effectiveness studies (see Goal #2B and #1Df) and make recommendations regarding revision to *Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children*.

B. Hold regional meetings by May 1993 regarding proposed revision to *Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children*.

C. Recommend to the State Superintendent's Advisory Council (SSAC) by August 1993 potential revision to *Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children*.

Goal #4:

To increase opportunities for employment and/or postsecondary education for special education graduates.

Strategies

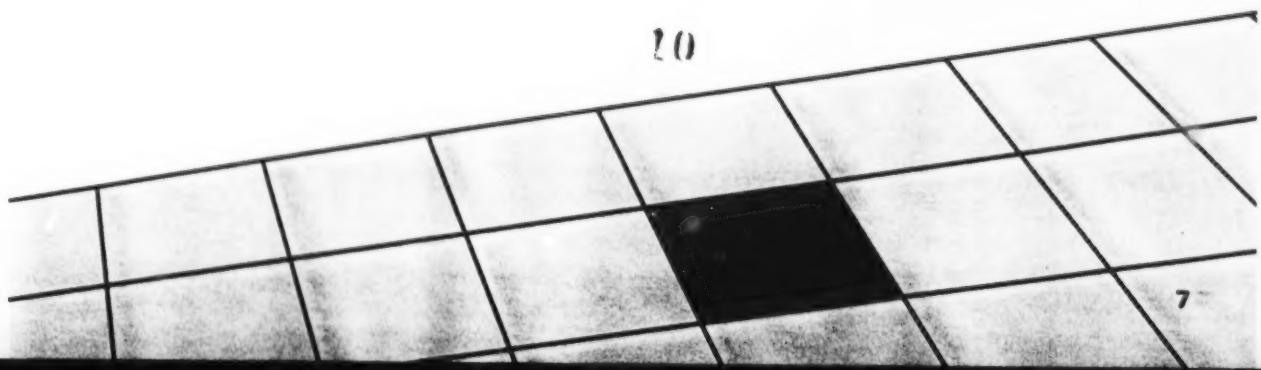
A. Disseminate by January 1991 guidelines for the development of individual transition plans including a description of the roles of schools, agencies, employers, students, and parents.

B. Secure by July 1991 interagency transition plans or cooperative agreements designed to increase employment and/or postsecondary educational opportunities for special education graduates.

C. Increase, beginning in September 1991, community awareness of the employability of students with handicaps.

D. Establish by January 1992 employer/business advisory committees (e.g., Job Service Employment Committee), including representation from the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation on a countywide basis.

E. Recognize, beginning in August 1992, outstanding work-study students, work-study clubs, and employers of students with handicaps.



GOALS and STRATEGIES

Goal #5:

To improve preservice and inservice education for both regular and special education personnel.

Strategies

A. Issue RFPs to heads of teacher education by January 1991 under the direction of the State Superintendent's Task Force for Preparing Special Education Personnel (SSTF) to (1) identify competencies needed for effective collaborative teaching designed to meet the needs of students with handicaps in regular education classrooms; (2) identify competencies needed for teaching students in special education classrooms, including technology-dependent students (e.g., teaching functional life skills); (3) evaluate the effectiveness of noncategorical or cross-categorical special education teacher training programs; and (4) provide training opportunities (course work and field experience) in collaborative behavior.

B. Use likelihood-impact analysis by July 1992, and every five years thereafter, to achieve consensus among representatives of the education community regarding critical teacher competencies.

C. Provide, beginning in September 1992, integrated inservice programs for regular and special education personnel that target areas of critical teacher competencies identified through Goal #5B.

D. Provide, beginning in September 1992, inservice programs for principals that enable them to facilitate and support the provision of instruction to students with handicaps.

E. Obtain by September 1993 a resolution from the Ohio Assembly of Deans and Heads of Teacher Education that beginning in July 1996 graduates of both regular and special education personnel training programs demonstrate competence in the critical teacher competencies identified through Goal #5B, and that an ODE evaluation team manual be developed that includes appropriate language related to Goal #5B.

Goal #6:

To improve instructional programs for students with handicaps.

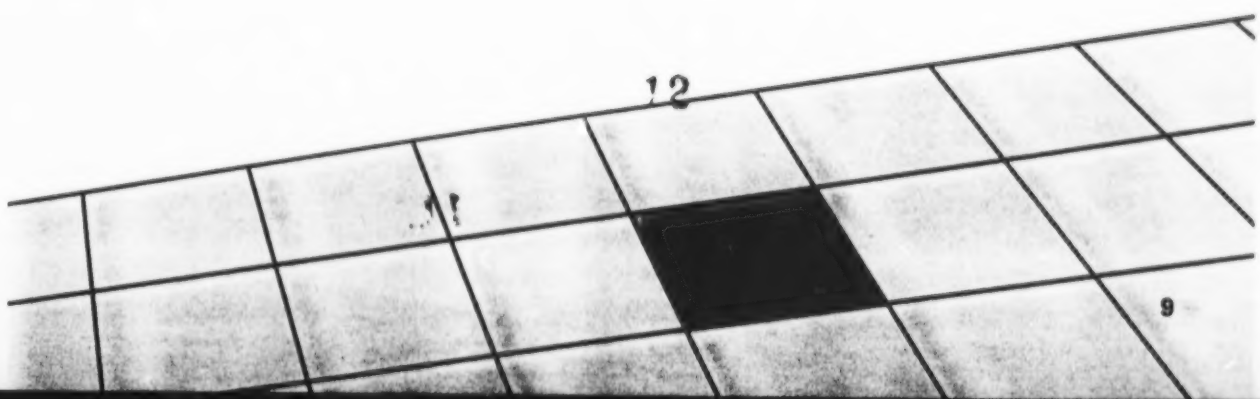
Strategies

A. Develop a comprehensive set of resource guides, including program objectives, scope and sequence charts, and related teaching strategies by July 1992, the focus of which is instruction in functional academic, employability, and social skills using real-life oriented experiences.

B. Field test the resource guides, beginning in September 1992, with the involvement of at least 51 percent of Ohio's special education classroom teachers.

C. Provide technical assistance, beginning in September 1993, to regular and special education teaching personnel in the use of the resource guides to individualize instruction for students with handicaps.

D. Ensure, beginning in September 1993, that instruction for special education students is curriculum-based and individualized to meet each student's identified needs.



GOALS and STRATEGIES

Goal #7:

To provide supportive services and training to families of children with handicaps.

Strategies

A. Convene by July 1991 a committee comprised in part of parents, school personnel, and social service agency personnel, to develop guidelines for facilitating the effective involvement of parents in their children's educational program. Guidelines will include the development of a written plan for providing information, training, and supportive services (e.g., convening support groups, improving communication between parents and school personnel, conducting home visits).

B. Disseminate by August 1992 the guidelines developed through Goal #7A.

C. Develop and disseminate by January 1993 an informational booklet for all parents that would include information about accessing the special education system and interpreting special education rules.

D. Review through the PREP (program review and evaluation procedures) process, beginning in September 1993, school districts' plans for providing information, training, and supportive services to families of children with handicaps.

E. Provide training, designed to improve working relationships between parents and school personnel, beginning in September 1993, that is developed and conducted jointly by parents and educators for parents and educators.

Goal #8:

To evaluate special education program effectiveness through special education student outcomes.

Strategies

A. Implement by January 1991 a data-collection system to track special education students one, three, and five years after high school graduation.

B. Collect, beginning in September 1991, data regarding (1) the percent of IEP instructional objectives mastered annually by each special education student; (2) the number of special education students who drop out of school prior to graduation; (3) the number of special education students who take and pass the statewide proficiency test; (4) the number of special education students who are employed and/or enrolled in training programs following graduation; and (5) the number of students who return to regular class placements as nonhandicapped youngsters.

C. Provide technical assistance, beginning in September 1991, regarding special education program evaluation.

D. Require, beginning in September 1992, LEAs to conduct self-evaluations of special education program effectiveness, using the student outcome measures listed in Goal #8B.

E. Monitor, beginning in September 1993, LEA self-evaluations of special education program effectiveness.

GLOSSARY of TERMS

At-Risk

At-risk children and youth are individuals birth through twenty-one years of age who are unlikely to complete elementary and secondary school successfully and to acquire skills necessary for higher education and/or employment. Contributing factors may include the following: alcohol/drug abuse, cyclical poverty, delinquency/truancy, family abuse/neglect, family structure, handicapping condition, health condition, inadequate readiness skills/developmental delay, inappropriate school curriculum, inappropriate school placement, limited English/non-English speaking, low self-esteem, and pregnancy (Ohio Department of Education, 1988).

Case Management Services

Services provided to families of infants and toddlers with handicaps to assist them in gaining access to early intervention services identified in the individual family services plan (IFSP) (34 CFR, Part 300, Section 303.6).

Early Childhood Transition

The movement of a preschool-age youngster from an early childhood program to a school-age educational program.

Employability Skills

Employability skills are those personal-social behaviors and daily living habits that have been identified by employers and young entry-level workers as essential for obtaining employment and for attaining success in the workplace. Following directions, attendance, cooperation, and personal hygiene are examples of employability skills (Ohio Department of Education, 1987).

Functional Curriculum

An approach to instruction through which students learn functional skills in the setting most appropriate for specific skill acquisition.[1]

Handicapped Child

A person below twenty-two years of age who is classified in accordance with *Rules for the Education of Handicapped Children* (Ohio Department of Education, 1982) as multihandicapped, hearing handicapped, visually handicapped, orthopedically and/or other health handicapped, severe behavior handicapped, developmentally handicapped, specific learning disabled, and/or speech handicapped.

Individual Transition Plan (ITP)

An ITP is a written tool developed to assist in planning for transition.

Postsecondary Education

Any educational experience beyond the high school experience.

Preschool-Age

Children who are three through five years of age.

Vocational Transition

. . . A carefully planned process which may be initiated either by school personnel or adult service providers to establish and implement a plan for either employment or additional vocational training of a handicapped student who will graduate or leave school in three to five years; such a process must involve special educators, vocational educators, parents and/or the student, an adult service system representative, and possibly an employer.[2]

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[1]L. West, "Functional Curriculum," *Ohio's Special Education Futures Forum* (Ohio Department of Education, 1989), p. 15.

[2]P. H. Wehman, et al., "Vocational Transition for Students with Developmental Disabilities," *Pathways to Employment for Adults with Developmental Disabilities* (Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes), p. 114.

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ACTION PLAN TIME LINE

Start Date	Activity	Goal/Strategy
Fall 1990	Preschool education emphasized in Project OHIO campaign	1A
	Preschool programs monitored	1B
November 1990	RFPs issued for LEA pilot programs	2A
January 1991	Guidelines disseminated for ITP development	4A
	RFPs issued to IHEs	5A
	Data-collection system implemented to track special education graduates	8A
July 1991	Preschool rules implemented	1C
	Interagency agreements secured to increase employment/educational opportunities for special education graduates	4B
	Parent-educator task force convened to develop guidelines	7A
September 1991	Community awareness of employability increased	4C
	Data regarding special education effectiveness outcome measures collected	8B
	Technical assistance provided regarding program evaluation	8C
January 1992	Employer advisory committees established	4D
July 1992	Consensus on critical teacher competencies achieved through likelihood-impact analysis (to be repeated every five years)	5B
	Comprehensive set of resource guides developed	6A
August 1992	Outstanding work-study students, clubs, and employers recognized	4E
	Guidelines for parent involvement disseminated	7B

ACTION PLAN TIME LINE

Start Date	Activity	Goal/Strategy
September 1992	LEA pilot programs evaluated	2B
	Pilot program effectiveness data analyzed	2C
	Statewide task force established to review pilot program effectiveness data	3A
	Integrated inservice programs provided	5C
	Inservice programs for principals provided	5D
	Resource guides field tested	6B
	LEA self-evaluations of program effectiveness required	8D
January 1993	Informational booklets disseminated to all parents	7C
May 1993	Regional meetings held for *Rules*	3B
July 1993	Full implementation of IATs achieved	2D
August 1993	LEA model programs recognized	2E
	Potential revision to *Rules* recommended to SSAC	3C
September 1993	Information about LEA model programs disseminated	2F
	Resolution obtained from Ohio Assembly of Deans and Heads of Teacher Education	5E
	Technical assistance provided in use of resource guides	6C
	Instruction for special education students is curriculum-based and individualized	6D
	LEA plans for providing services to parents reviewed	7D
	Parent-educator training provided	7E
	LEA self-evaluations of program effectiveness monitored	8E

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